

Friday 05 June 2020

### Letter to all parents – and especially Year 10 parents

Dear Parent/Carer

The purpose of this letter is to give you as much detail as possible regarding our risk assessment and measures to be put into place for staff, students and parents at Merrill academy when we open on **15<sup>th</sup> June 2020**. We are currently expecting about 60 Year 10 students in small groups across four days throughout the week.

Please understand that the arrangements proposed for Merrill Academy may be very different from other Derby schools because we have different constraints in terms of staffing and accommodation. Our plans will also be adjusted as the Covid -19 situation changes.

From **15<sup>th</sup> June 2020** the only students able to attend school will be

- Vulnerable pupils currently attending school
- Children of Critical Workers currently attending school
- all Year 10 students **but only** on allocated **House** days from **10.15am to 12.30pm** which are

**Brunel - Monday**

**Nightingale- Tuesday**

**Shackleton- Wednesday**

**Windsor - Thursday**

Year 10 will be taught a rolling programme of English, maths and science initially.

They will remain in the same classroom for both lessons every week and at the same desk. They will be taught by the same 3 teachers for maths, English and science. There will be no more than 10 students in a classroom. Only 3 groups of year 10 will be in school on any one day., In accordance with government guidance, there will be no more than a quarter (30) Year 10 students in school on any day.

The canteen will **not** be available to Year 10 for their sessions in school, and we will **not** be providing lunches at this time for Year 10 as they are attending mid- morning only. Students entitled to free school meals will continue to be issued with vouchers. We will review this as the situation changes. Students can bring a water bottle.

Year 10 students need to bring their own pencil case and equipment. This ensures that they only use their own equipment and are not at risk of sharing equipment previously used by others. For students who do not bring a pencil case, we will provide them with equipment which will then be labelled for their sole use.

From 15<sup>th</sup> June, all students will need to be in our **basic uniform of a white shirt, uniform black trousers or skirt with shoes**. Because of washing considerations, students do not need to wear a blazer or tie at this time. Please contact your child's Head of House via the main office if any of this a problem. We will be reviewing uniform expectations for September, when we have more information from the government.

We feel that uniform will help pupils with the 'normality' of school and will help quickly re-foster the sense of belonging and commitment to the school rules. As Year 10 will only be in for one session per week this provides a reasonable amount of time to get it washed before the next session.

Students should **not** bring any bags to school.

### **Risk Assessment and Planning**

We recognise that all parents/carers will have concerns about their children coming back to school. We have conducted a thorough risk assessment and written a robust plan for re-integration. We have followed all relevant advice and will continue to adapt our planning on an on-going basis to meet the best needs of students and staff.

We will continue to provide care for **Critical Worker children** (including those in Year 10) and **Vulnerable pupils**, and they will be able to be in school all week (Monday to Friday) **from 9.00am to 3.00pm**.

To enable social distancing, timings for the school day will differ from the current timings. We request that Year 10 do **not** arrive before **10.05am**. Students need to use the canal path entrance where they will be directed by staff to enter the academy building by the rear English/music corridor entrance. They will then leave **before lunch at 12.30pm**.

Please do not encourage your child to walk to school in a group with other parents or students; and vice versa when they leave the academy to go home. We strongly encourage students to enter and leave school alone. The canal path entrance gate will be open from 10.05 – 10:15 in the morning for a flexible starting time. Students should avoid arriving before these times.

Parents should not come onto the school site at the start or end of the morning sessions. The reception area will be closed to parents. Any messages for staff can be communicated via telephone 01332 576777 or email [schoolclosure@merrillacademy.derby.sch.uk](mailto:schoolclosure@merrillacademy.derby.sch.uk)

Year 10 will be expected to be in school Monday to Thursday, on their allocated house days **only**. You will need to let the school know, in the usual way, if your child is ill and will not be attending. However, if you are a critical worker of a child in Years 7-10 you can still pick your days, but if your child is in Year 10 they need to attend on their house day.

### **What if Year 10 are late to school on their allocated day?**

If a year 10 student arrives after lesson start at 10.30am, they need to go straight to reception, maintaining a social distance. They must use the hand gel before going into the main part of the building and will then be escorted by a member of staff to their classroom base.

### **What safety measures are being put in place?**

Social distancing has been marked out across the school and in classrooms.

Hand gel will be available at all times for students and staff. All staff will have access to hand sanitiser gel in every classroom and boxes of tissues for immediate use and disposal, anti-bacterial spray and disposable hand towels. Appropriate staff have access to PPE (gloves, masks, aprons). This will be used by those dealing with any medical situations and by the catering staff. All students will use the hand sanitiser gel on their way in to the school building and on their way out of the school building. Those in Key Worker school will, in addition, use the hand sanitiser dispenser before their lunch and also afterwards. All classroom doors will be propped open throughout the day to reduce contact with door handles. Fire considerations have been risk assessed around this. A member of staff will be on duty outside the **student toilets** and will remind students about hand washing. To ensure social distancing, **there will be a 'one in one out' rule**. Year 10 are encouraged to go to the toilet before leaving home so they do not risk missing any of the 2 hours of learning time in school. Students and staff will be regularly reminded to keep a 2m social distance. Hand sanitiser will be available in all classrooms. All will have anti-bacterial wipes for regular cleaning of surfaces. Classrooms

will be ventilated as appropriate. Before and after signing in at the main entrance, staff and visitors will use hand gel. The signing in screen will be regularly cleaned. At both student entrances, social distance markings have been made for queuing to come into school. Surfaces in classrooms will be wiped down regularly during the day by cleaning staff. The school will be thoroughly cleaned at the end of each day. Frequently touched surfaces throughout the school will be wiped down with antibacterial wipes and/or spray. There will be a focus on good respiratory hygiene...**Catch it, Bin it, Kill it.**

Tutors and the safeguarding team will continue to make contact with individual families of children at home to check everything is ok and support with home learning. For students in school, we will be providing individual support to any pupils who require it. Year 10 students will also follow a pastoral programme to support well-being when they return to school.

#### **What happens if someone becomes unwell at Merrill Academy?**

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature at school, the parent will be called to collect them and they will be sent home. Parents will be advised to follow the COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection guidance. If a child is awaiting collection, they will be moved to a room where they can be isolated with appropriate adult supervision. PPE will be worn by staff caring for the child, while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. In an emergency, we will call 999; if the child is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. In this situation, the advice to schools is that they must not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

#### **What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus at Merrill Academy?**

We will follow whatever guidance is in place at the time from the Department of Education and Public Health England.

Further personalised details will be sent out to year 10 students shortly. Your support and gratitude for the hard work of all my staff at this difficult time is much appreciated.

Take care and stay safe.

Yours sincerely



Ms J Harlow  
Headteacher